

Covering the States of Texas,
Oklahoma, New Mexico, Louisiana,
and Arkansas



Region VI



US Department of
Housing and Urban
Development

Southwest News-Second Q 2014

Message from the Regional Administrator

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HUD Grant Opportunities

[FR-5800-N-04](#)

**Lead Based Paint Control and
Reduction Grants**

Open 5/13/2014

Closed 6/27/2014

[FR-5800-N-08](#)

**Family Self Sufficiency Coordi-
nators**

Open 4/23/2014

Closed 5/29/2014

[FR-5800-N-01](#)

**Notice of the Department's
Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 NOFAs
for Discretionary Programs**

Open 02/19/2014

Open 02/19/2015

**Follow Links to Grants.gov
for More information**



"Every Month Should be Fair Housing Month"

Tammye H. Treviño
HUD Regional
Administrator
Region VI

April is officially designated as Fair Housing Month in this country, and during this past April, I viewed an important documentary called "**A Matter of Place**," produced by the **Fair Housing Justice Center**. I was reminded of why our work to end housing discrimination is as relevant today as it was when the **Fair Housing Act** was passed in 1968, and that we need to focus on eradicating housing and lending discrimination not just in April, but in every month of the year.

The film clearly illustrates, that despite the perception of many, housing discrimination is very much a part of American life today. It shows one rental agent refusing to take a couple's application fee because they are black; a man returning home to see anti-gay slurs scrawled on his door; and a landlord calling one of his tenants a "program person" and offering him a roach-infested apartment because the tenant receives a housing subsidy.

These incidents still happen in cities large and small. They point to the invisible struggle families often go through to give their children and loved ones a safe and decent place to call home.

We wish there were no more instances of housing discrimination, but when it happens, HUD wants to hear about it. If you feel you've been a victim of housing discrimination, you can [report it](#).

Continued: "Regional Administrator" on Page 3

San Antonio and Choctaw Nation Named Promise Zones

This January, HUD and USDA announced the five inaugural U.S. communities that have been designated as Promise Zones, a new approach by the Administration to revitalizing distressed communities. The first five Promise Zones--

two of which are located in Region VI--are San Antonio, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Southeastern Kentucky, and the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Each had put forward a plan of how they would leverage federal partnerships

and resources in the most effective ways to improve their communities. In exchange, these designees will be able to access federal investments in order to achieve their goals. See *Promise Zones* on p. 3

HUD Releases FHA “Blueprint to Access,” Requests Comment on Pilot Program that Reduces Mortgage Premiums for First Time Homebuyers

HUD is committed to providing access to mortgage credit for qualified borrowers as a means of building wealth and stabilizing communities. As part of this effort, FHA recently issued its **“Blueprint for Access”** outlining the additional steps the agency is taking to assist underserved borrowers.

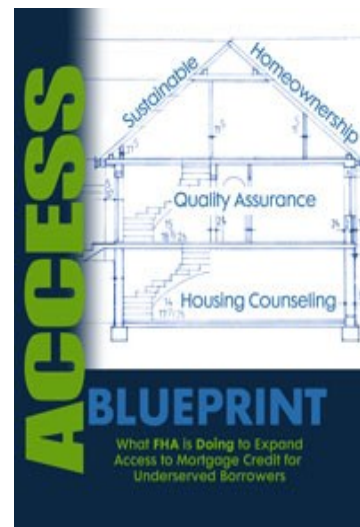
As a part of the Blueprint, the HUD Office of Housing Counseling published a notice on May 15 in the *Federal Register* requesting comment on a four-year housing counseling pilot called, “Homeowners Armed

with Knowledge (HAWK).” HAWK makes qualified, first time homebuyers eligible for reductions in their mortgage insurance premiums (MIP) as long as they participate in a comprehensive housing counseling process.

FHA proposes that borrowers who complete housing counseling before signing a contract to purchase a home and who complete additional pre-closing housing counseling will receive a 50 basis point reduction in the upfront FHA mortgage insurance premium (MIP) and a 10 basis point reduction in the Annual

FHA MIP. Borrowers who have no serious delinquencies and complete post-closing counseling will get an additional 15 basis point annual MIP reduction for the remainder of the mortgage, after the first 24 months from closing. FHA estimates that the average buyer would save approximately \$325 a year – or almost \$9,800 over the life of the loan.

During the first of two pilot phases, FHA will select a limited number of lenders, servicers and housing counselors to participate. For those interested, the Notice describes the criteria and process HUD will use for selecting pilot participants.



Phase Two of the pilot will expand the program to all lenders, servicers and housing counselors.

Click on the link, first paragraph for complete information.

The comment period closes on July 15. See the Notice here: www.hud.gov/lenders.

Promise Zones, continued from page 1

“The Promise Zones effort represents a partnership for progress,” stated HUD Regional Administrator Tammye Trevino. “Federal agencies will be working with each other and local leaders to give distressed communities—urban, rural and tribal—the assets they need to succeed, including good schools, safe streets and quality housing in order to give families what every American deserves: a fair chance to succeed.”

The five Promise Zones announced this January are part of the 20 that will be chosen over the next three years.

San Antonio’s plan for its Eastside neighborhood emphasizes job creation and training in partnership with St. Phillips College; increasing enrollment in pre-K, early college and adult education programs; expanding public safety; and the creation of a multi-modal transit hub.

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma will focus on job training, in conjunction with OSU, Eastern Oklahoma State College and the Kiamichi Tech Center; investments in needed water and sewer infrastructure that have impeded investment in the area; improving educational outcomes across 85 school districts; and economic development initiatives.

For more information about Promise Zones, see the website: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/economicdevelopment/programs/pz

National and Local Press Releases (click release to read full text)

HUD Announces New Renewable Energy Partnerships

HUD and Census Bureau Announce New Residential Construction Activity in April

Region VI Press Releases

HUD Secretary Announces Disaster Assistance for Arkansas Storm Victims

Homeless Grants

HUD Provides \$4.3 Million to Fund 24 Homeless Programs in Arkansas

HUD Provides \$28 Million to Fund 155 Homeless Programs in Louisiana

HUD Provides \$8.1 Million to Fund 47 Homeless Programs in New Mexico

HUD Provides \$6.7 Million to Fund 55 Homeless Programs in Oklahoma

HUD Provides Nearly \$69 Million to Fund 228 Homeless Programs in Texas

HOPWA

HUD Awards Nearly \$1 Million to Local HIV-AIDS Housing Programs in Texas

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**Learn more about
HUD at
www.HUD.gov**

Regional Administrator's Message, continued from page 1.

The Fair Housing Act prohibits housing discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, gender, disability, or familial status. In addition, approximately 20 states, the District of Columbia and more than 150 cities, towns and counties across the nation also have additional protections that specifically prohibit discrimination against individuals based upon sexual preference and gender identity.

Each day, HUD fights inequality in housing, and we'll keep fighting, along with the help from our fair housing partners. While in April we celebrated the passage of the Fair Housing Act, the work goes on to spread the word that the law protects you from those who would deny you your place in American life.

Watch "A Matter of Place": <http://vimeo.com/77785957>

HUD Policy Development and Research

Read PD&R's e-newsletter, THE EDGE, to keep current on policy development and research breaking news.

Border Community Capital Initiative Grants Awarded to Boost Economic Development in the Colonias

At a press event held at Affordable Homes of South Texas in McAllen, Texas, in March, HUD Regional Administrator Tammye Treviño announced \$2 million in grants to stimulate job growth and business opportunities in chronically underserved rural areas along the U.S.-Mexico border region. Provided through HUD's [Border Community Capital Initiative \("Border Initiative"\)](#), grantees are expected to leverage an additional \$5.5 million from other public and private sources to increase investment in 'colonias' where there are few oppor-

tunities for businesses to access private capital.

"The grants announced today are an effort of the White House Rural Council, which was launched by President Obama in 2012 to help create jobs and expand opportunities in rural communities," said RA Treviño. "The *Border Initiative* is a partnership among three federal agencies – HUD, the Department of the Treasury's Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (CDFI Fund) and the Department of Agriculture – Rural Development (USDA-RD), to better coordinate resources and assistance to colonias residents."

HUD grants will provide direct investment and technical assistance to community development lending and investing institutions that focus on affordable housing, small business and community facilities to benefit the residents of colonias. For more information, click on the link.

Below, l-r, Roel Gomez, USDA Area Director; Alexis Gallegos, Office of Rep. Henry Cuellar; Desiree Mendez; Office of Rep. Ruben Hinojosa; Celina Pena, Chief Program Off, ACCION; RA Tammye Trevino; Robert Calvillo, AHSTI Executive Director, at the press event.



HUD RA Treviño is interviewed by the media about HUD's Border Initiative grants. HUD is partnering with USDA Rural Development and Treasury's Comm. Develop. Financial Institutions Fund to better coordinate resources for colonias



Renovation of Historic Rte. 66 Sundowner Motel in Albuquerque

On May 201, 2014, Albuquerque HUD FOD Elise McConnell, ONAP Deputy Administrator David Southerland, and Albuquerque Mayor Richard

Berry attended the ribbon cutting ceremony at the Sundowner Motel. A Route 66 landmark in Al-

bquerque from the 1960's, the Sundowner was redesigned in vintage Vegas-style and now has 71 apartments for low income, middle income, and disabled persons. Developed by New Life Homes, the \$9.2million project received \$42,800 through HUD's Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance

Award. One of the worst-kept secrets of the Sundowner Motel was that in 1975 two men lived there for a brief time while writing computer programs and trying to start a company. As they were not able to acquire financing, they moved on. One man was Paul Allen, the other was Bill Gates, and the company was Microsoft.



l-r: Albuquerque Mayor Richard Berry and HUD FOD Elise McConnell at the ribbon cutting for the Sundowner Motel, a Rt. 66 landmark, which will provide 71 affordable apartments.

Region VI Welcomes New Field Office Directors in Little Rock and New Orleans

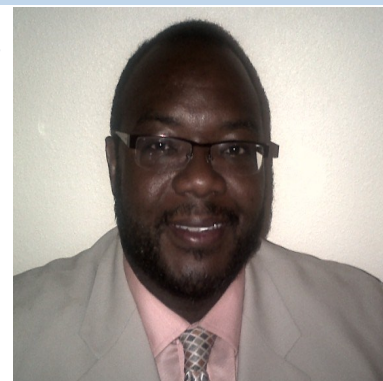
Regional Administrator Tammye Treviño recently announced the appointment of two new Region VI HUD Field Office Directors: Wanda Merritt in Little Rock and Earl Randall in New Orleans. As FODs, Ms. Merritt and Mr. Randall oversee all HUD program delivery in the States of Arkansas and Louisiana, respectively.

"I am very pleased to announce that Ms. Merritt and Mr. Randall have been selected as FODs her commitment to client service, ably prepared her to be the head of the Little Rock Field Ofin Region VI," said RA Treviño. "Wanda's experience as the former Lubbock FOD, coupled with fice, and Earl's record of excellence from his time at LSU to his work as a Disaster Coordinator after Hurricane Katrina made him an ideal choice to lead HUD's efforts in Louisiana."

Ms. Merritt joined HUD in 1998 as a Community Builder in the Lubbock Field Office. Previously, she was the Community Development Administrator for the City of Abilene, managing HUD's Community Development Block Grant, HOME Investment Partnerships Program and the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Assistance Program. She was the FOD in the Lubbock Field Office until it closed in 2013.

She received a bachelor's degree in business management and a master of business administration degree from Angelo State University in Texas. In 2009, Merritt successfully completed HUD's Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) and in 1998 attended Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government Executive Program in Public Management.

Mr. Randall received both a bachelor and a master's degree from Louisiana State University. While a graduate student, he was selected for the federal Presidential Management Intern Program and began working for HUD in 2000. Upon completion of his internship, Mr. Randall accepted a position in the HUD New Orleans Field Office within the Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD). He later became a Senior CPD Disaster Specialist, providing oversight and technical assistance for the administration of disaster grants in both Louisiana and New York, with total funding in excess of \$18 billion.



**New Orleans Field Officer
Director Earl Randall**



Little Rock Field Office Director



Southern Crossing Apartments



Little Rock FOD Wanda Merritt second from r.) with officials at Pine Bluff HA's Southern Crossing ribbon cutting.

Pine Bluff Housing Authority in Arkansas Celebrates Opening of Southern Crossing Affordable Apartments

On February 18, 2014, the Pine Bluff Housing Authority held a ribbon-cutting for Southern Crossing Apartments, a \$10.7 Million affordable housing development in Pine Bluff, Arkansas.

Southern Crossing is a mixed-income, mixed finance community with three-and four-bedroom single family dwellings. Forty-eight of the 65 units will be affordable for low-income persons.

Additionally, the housing authority is providing Section 8 Rental Assistance for 35 of the affordable units.

The development was made possible by a number of financing sources, including a Letter of Credit from Simmons Bank; an award of Affordable Housing Tax Credits and HOME Funds from the Arkansas

Development Finance Authority; CDBG funds from the city; and HUD FHA Financing.

During the ribbon-cutting, Wanda C. Merritt, Little Rock HUD Director, praised Pine Bluff Housing Authority Executive Director, Jeannie H. Epperson, for having a vision for more affordable housing in the community, but more importantly, recognizing the need for partnerships to make the vision a reality.

The ribbon-cutting was attended by approximately 150 people, including Pine Bluff Mayor Debe Hollingsworth, Jefferson County Judge Dutch King, and Pine Bluff Housing Authority Chairman Logan Hampton, Sr.

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FTWRO Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity

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Multifamily Housing

[Follow link to Contacts Page](#)

Public Housing

[Follow link to Contacts Page](#)

To File a Fair Housing Complaint

888-560-8913

To Report Fraud in HUD Programs-OIG

800-347-3735

For information on all HUD Programs

[Follow the Link](#)

We welcome your comments, suggestions and submissions for the *HUD Region VI Newsletter*.

Please send them to Patricia Campbell, patricia.a.campbell@hud.gov or Scott Hudman,
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